

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7207

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT AU PRINCE 0061

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HA

SUBJ: PRESIDENT EMPHASIZES ORDER AND GRADUALISM IN NEW YEAR'S
SPEECH

REF: 77 PORT AU PRINCE 4747

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. PRESIDENT JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER'S TRADITIONAL JANUARY 2 SPEECH WAS MARKED BY EMPHASIS ON ORDER AND GRADUALISM. SUPPORTING THE SUPPOSITION THAT THIS MORE CONSERVATIVE APPROACH IS GOVERNMENT DOCTRINE IS THE RECENT APPEARANCE OF A NEW STAUNCHLY ESTABLISHMENTARIAN MONTHLY WHICH CALLS ITSELF THE ORGAN OF "JEAN-CLAUDISM." IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WE ANTICIPATE CONSIDERABLE TENUOUSNESS AND UNCERTAINTY IN GOVERNMENT AS THIS APPROACH TAKES SHAPE AND THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE OLD LINE DUVALIERISTS IS DETERMINED. THIS MOOD WILL PROBABLY BE COUPLED WITH HEIGHTENED NATIONALISM AND RESISTANCE TO PERCEIVED OUTSIDE INFLUENCES. THE COUNTRY'S PROGRESSIVE ELEMENTS REMAIN DISAFFECTED BUT LARGEY IMPOTENT. END SUMMARY.

2. NINE-TENTHS OF PRESIDENT'S ANCESTOR DAY SPEECH ALMOST EXACTLY DUPLICATED LAST YEAR'S ADDRESS BUT NUANCES IN THE INTRODUCTION AND PERORATION PROVIDED FAIRLY CLEAR INDICATION

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THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS VEERED TO MORE CONSERVATIVE COURSE. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO OVERT REFERENCE TO THE "NEREE AFFAIR" AND ITS AFTERMATH, THE NEW EMPHASIS IS AN IMPLICIT RESPONSE TO A SITUATION THE GOVERNMENT CLEARLY FELT HAD GOTTEN OUT OF HAND.

3. MESSAGE PUTS PARTICULAR STRESS ON TWO THEMES: ORDER

AND GRADUALISM. ORDER THEME FIRST EMERGED PROMINENTLY IN NOVEMBER 18 ARMED FORCES DAY SPEECH AND REFERENCES TO "PEACE AND ORDER" ARE SPRINKLED LIBERALLY THROUGHOUT POLITICAL PORTIONS OF SPEECH. BASIS OF THIS ORDER IS EXPRESSED IN KEY PHRASE "I WILL NEVER CEASE TO PROCLAIM INALTERABLE ATTACHMENT TO THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERALIZATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION WHOSE PROGRESSIVE INSTALLATION IN THE MOST FARAWAY CORNERS OF THE COUNTRY IS INEVITABLY CALLED FOR TO PRODUCE A REAL RENAISSANCE: THAT OF THE HAITIAN MENTALITY SO THAT GOVERNORS AND GOVERNED WILL KNOW THEIR RIGHTS ARE NOT ABSOLUTE AND THAT THEIR DUTIES TOWARDS THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY ARE UNLIMITED."

4. STRONG EMPHASIS ON GRADUALISM IS EXPRESSED IN FREQUENT REFERENCES TO PROGRESSIVENESS. IN CONTRAST TO LAST YEAR'S RINGING CALL FOR JOINING HANDS TO ADVANCE THE ECONOMIC REVOLUTION, THE PRESIDENT CONCLUDED HIS SPEECH BY ASKING HIS PEOPLE TO JOIN WITH HIM, "UNDER THE AEGIS OF PROGRESSIVE JEAN-CLAUDISM," IN CLIMBING THE PATH LEADING TO PROSPERITY AND GREAT HOPES "NOT IN A MAD AND DISORDERED RUSH BUT WITH A SURE AND PERSEVERING CONDUCT."

5. PRESIDENT DOES REITERATE HIS ADHERENCE, AS PREDICTED, TO LIBERALIZATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION, AS WELL AS "JEAN-CLAUDISM." HE DOES REPEAT HIS CALL FOR THE UNITY OF THE "HAITIAN FAMILY," AND FOR ECONOMIC REVOLUTION. BUT HE DOES SO IN A CONTEXT CAREFULLY CIRCUMSCRIBED BY A CONSERVATIVE

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APPROACH WHICH NOW APPEARS TO BE DOCTRINE. THIS NEW BALANCE IS REFLECTED IN A NEW MONTHLY PUBLICATION "L'ASSAUT" WHICH ANONYMOUSLY PURPORTS TO BE AN ORGAN OF JEAN-CLAUDISM AND, WE UNDERSTAND, ORIGINATES WITH MINITERS-WITHOUT-PORTFOLIO BAYARD.

6. IN THE MORE TRADITIONAL PORTION OF HIS SPEECH THE PRESIDENT SPECIFICALLY THANKED THE NUMEROUS FOREIGN DONORS, INCLUDING US, FOR THEIR AID. AT THE SAME TIME HE STATED THAT HISTORICALLY HAITI HAS NO LESSONS TO LEARN FROM ANYONE IN THE REALM OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THAT IT INSISTS ON THE SCRUPULOUS OBSERVANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. THE LATTER REMARKS ARE QUITE SIMILAR TO THOSE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT LAST YEAR AND ON OTHER OCCASIONS SINCE THEN BUT THEY WERE PARTICULARLY WELCOMED THIS YEAR BY OLD LINE DUVALIERISTS SENSITIVE TO WHAT THEY REGARD AS US PRODDING OF HAITIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

7. IN ADDITION TO A RECITATION OF NUMEROUS PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS AND PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE FIELDS OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE, ETC. IN PURSUIT OF HIS ECONOMIC REVOLUTION, THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED THAT HAITI WOULD SIGN IN THE NEAR FUTURE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FOR

CONSTRUCTION OF AN IRRIGATION DAM ON THE PEDERNALES RIVER WHICH
DEFINES THE TWO COUNTRIES' LAND BORDER IN THE SOUTH. THE
PRESIDENT ALSO CALLED ON OTHER NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW
THE EXAMPLE OF CUBA AND RESPOND TO HAITI'S INVITATION TO
DEFINE MARITIME BOUNDARIES IN THE CARIBBEAN SO AS TO AVOID
POTENTIAL CONFLICTS IN THE AREA.

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8. COMMENT: THE SPEECH WAS DISAPPOINTING FOR THOSE WHO LOOKED
FOR GREATER REASSURANCES OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO
LIBERALIZATION. RUMORS OF AN ANNOUNCEMENT ON ELECTIONS IN
1978 DID NOT BEAR FRUIT. NOR DID THE PRESIDENT OFFER ANY
ENCOURAGEMENT THAT HE WOULD RENEW THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS A FREER
PRESS. WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE POLITICAL JOCKEYING
PRECEDING AND INCLUDING THE NEREÉ AFFAIR, THE SPEECH EMERGES
AS A CONSERVATIVE STATEMENT REFLECTING THE ASCENDANCY OF THE
OLD LINE CONSERVATIVE DUVALIERIST ADVISORS. THE PRESIDENT'S
COMMITMENT TO LIBERALIZATION HAS BEEN REAFFIRMED BUT IN TERMS
WHICH PROMISE A MUCH MORE CONSERVATIVE APPROACH.

9. WHAT THAT APPROACH WILL MEAN IN PRACTICE REMAINS OBSCURE.
THE OLD LINE DUVALIERISTS HAVE EFFECTIVELY CALLED A HALT TO
WHAT THEY THOUGHT WAS A PELL MELL RUSH TO CHAOS. AND THEY
CLEARLY HAVE SIGNALLED THAT FUTURE MOVEMENT TOWARDS LIBERALI-
ZATION WILL BE BOTH SLOW AND CLOSELY RELATED TO THEIR CONCEPT
OF "PEACE AND ORDER." BUT WHETHER THEY WILL ATTEMPT TO
SPECIFY THE LIBERALIZATION STEPS OF THE FUTURE, OR DEMAND A
GREATER ROLE IN GOVERNMENT AND OTHER GOVERNMENT POLICY IS
NOT YET CLEAR. WE ANTICIPATE CONSIDERABLE TENUOUSNESS AND UN-
CERTAINTY IN GOVERNMENT IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AS THE NEW
LINES AND THE ACTORS OF "PROGRESSIVE" JEAN-CLAUDISM ARE WORKED

OUT. IT IS UNLIKELY JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER'S ROLE AS PRESIDENT
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WILL BE THREATENED DURING THIS TIME BUT HIS LEADERSHIP
ABILITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE GREATLY DIMINISHED.

10. WE ALSO ANTICIPATE THAT THE MONTHS AHEAD WILL BE MARKED
BY A MORE PRONOUNCED NATIONALISM. ALTHOUGH THE PRESIDENT'S
SPEECH WAS CAREFULLY POLITE TO ALL FOREIGN DONORS, ITS
NATIONALISTIC EDGE WAS SHARPER THAN LAST YEAR. THAT NATIONAL-
ISTIC THEME HAS, MOREOVER, BEEN WIDELY ECHOED IN THE LAST
FEW WEEKS AND EMERGED CLEARLY IN L'ASSAUT. IT REFLECTS THE
PROFESSED CONCERN OF OLD LINE DUVALIERISTS THAT THE U.S.
IS NOT ONLY IMPROPERLY TRYING TO ESTABLISH THE PACE OF
HAITIAN CHANGE BUT MAY EVEN BE TRYING TO FORCE THE DUVALIERISTS
OUT OF POWER. FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, THEREFORE, WEAKNESS IN
GOVERNMENT MAY BE COUPLED WITH RESISTANCE TO PERCEIVED INI-
MICAL EXTERNAL PRESSURE.

11. THE GULD BETWEEN THE ELEMENTS OF HAITIAN SOCIETY WHO
WANT MORE RAPID CHANGE TOWARDS POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION, MAINLY
CENTERED AMONG SOME OF THE YOUNGER INTELLECTUALS, REMAINS
AND GROWS WIDER. A FEW YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE TOLD EMBASSY
OFFICERS THAT THEY ARE MAKING PLANS TO LEAVE HAITI AS THEY
FEEL FRUSTRATED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO WORK WITHIN THE COUNTRY.
THE DISAFFECTION DOES NOT APPEAR TO PRESENT ANY IMMEDIATE
THREAT TO THE REGIME AND MAY ATTENUATE IN TIME, PARTICULARLY
IF THE GOVERNMENT DOES SHOW THAT IT INTENDS TO MAKE FURTHER
SEPS TOWARDS LIBERALIZATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CAN MAKE HEADWAY BEYOND MERELY MEETING THE
MOST BASIC SURVIVAL NEEDS OF THE MASS OF HAITIAN PEASANTS A
GROWING TIDE OF RISING EXPECTATIONS MAY FORCE A FASTER PACE
THAN THE OLD GUARD CAN CONTAIN.

12. COMMENT ON THE IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY HERE WILL
FOLLOW LATER IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE.

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